

THE DOROBO OF THE NORTH TINDJINET FOREST

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patronymic from their father's porridge name. Younger sons generally take their patronymic from the father's nickname, or else from some circumstance in their own lives.

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Circumcision

Boys are circumcised at the same intervals as the Nandi, and the Dorobo keep watch for the opening of the Nandi circumcision. Occasionally boys are circumcised in Nandi with other Nandi boys, but more often in the forest, as in the circumcision of 1926-30. Sometimes a Dorobo acts as operator for the Nandi. The whole procedure of circumcision (here) is identical with that of the Nandi. Girls undergo the operation of clitoridectomy whenever there are enough ready to be done, and not at any stated intervals.

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Age-sets

The Dorobo have borrowed the whole age-set system from the Nandi, and it works exactly as among the Nandi, with the same set-names and 15-year intervals synchronized with those of the Nandi. The reader may therefore be referred to the account of the Nandi system, p. 31. A slight difference in the sub-divisions called *mas* may be noted: the Dorobo have only three, called *Copinick*, the senior; *Teparik*¹ or *Kipalkowayak*, the middle; and *Ruwahank* or *Kiptonik*, the junior. A more significant difference is that the sets have no military or political force, for the Dorobo are not fighters, and the practical effect of the system is to introduce further behaviour patterns, as well as to modify the traditional rules of hospitality; for while no Dorobo would refuse to shelter one of his own herds, the degree of hospitality varies according to the age-set situation.

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POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Land Divisions

The Dorobo live mainly in clan settlements divided between a number of districts or parishes (*korwauk*, sing. *korol*). Till about 1930 these settlements were in small clearings inside the forest; after 1937 they were spread round the outer edge of the forest.

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The Clan

The clan, *oret*, is an exogamous patrilineal group with a name and a totem, *tiend op oret*, the animal of the clan. The existence of eight clans is attested by genealogies and the census; three others are reputed to exist or to have existed, though none occurred in my records; they were, however, mentioned to me in 1927 as well as in 1938-9. Each of these clans has one totem, except *Moi* which has three, one of which it shares with another clan; it is not the totem which is important, but the group itself, the clan being a social group, not a group of people mystically related through their totem. The emphasis is therefore on the clan name and not on the animal, though marriage, nevertheless, is forbidden within the clan. An exception to this rule is found in the case of *Moi*, where intermarriage is allowed between people of different totems, an anomalous feature due possibly to the influence of the Nandi, among whom *Moi* marriages are common between people of different totems. (See p. 27.) There seem to be no restrictions either on marriage between clans (as among the Nandi), or on killing or eating the clan animal, which suggests that originally the Dorobo clans were non-totemic, and that their present totemism is a feature borrowed from the Nandi along with the clan names, which except for one of the reputed clans are all Nandi.

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¹ The Nandi occasionally use *teparik* for this *mas*; it is a Nandi word meaning "the curves."

are *Asenda* to each other and equals, being of the same generation. So too are the sons of the father's brother, also *Kapidas* and *Kimayiki*, who are *masakor* to Ego. But Ego will be circumcised at the same time as his brother A and his *masakor* C, when his other brother B and *masakor* D are too young to be circumcised; B and D will therefore belong to junior age-sets, and when Ego, A, and C have been circumcised and are allowed to marry and indulge in other male pursuits, B and D will still have the inferior status of *asidi* or boys and be subordinate to their brothers as regards behaviour and social position. 561
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Each generation is therefore liable to be stratified in two layers comprising two age-sets which cut across the relationship system; and where the kinship behaviour patterns conflict with those of the age-set, the latter will prevail. Both sets in Ego's generation, for instance, will behave in the same way to father, father's brother, and father's father; but D and B cannot behave to Ego as C behaves to Ego, because they are merely boys who do not count for much, while Ego and C are men. Similarly, in the first descending generation all will behave in the same way to Ego's generation, but K and G must give to H, E, and F the respect that H, O, and F do not give to each other or to K and G. And the principle is the same with the second descending generation.

First ascending generation	JUNIORS	SENIORS	Generation as a whole
Own generation	JUNIORS	SENIORS	Generation as a whole
First descending generation	JUNIORS	SENIORS	Generation as a whole
Second descending generation	JUNIORS	SENIORS	Generation as a whole

The effect of the age-set on behaviour is to strengthen the traditional code of behaviour by emphasizing the disparity between seniors and juniors.

Age-sets also affect hospitality, for while no Dorobo would normally refuse to shelter one of his own horde, the degree of hospitality and of the intimacy to which he is admitted vary according to whether the visitor is an age-mate or not. If he is of the same age-set as his host (no matter what their respective *mostinuch* may be), he will sleep along with the host and his wife, though he will not be given the host's wife to sleep with as among the Nandi. But if he belongs to a different age-set, the wife will 574
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56/574 normally go elsewhere for the night, leaving the hut to the men. In the matter of hospitality, relationship by blood, marriage, or clan is a deciding factor in the length of time for which a man may expect to be put up by his host. Thus, no matter what the age-set situation may be, a man who is neither a relative nor a clansman cannot claim more than two nights' hospitality on account of necessity, and will not be given honey-wine; while a relative or clansman may be fed for a week or even longer, and the host will give him honey-wine if he has any.

3. Behaviour

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[539] A brief summary of the modes of behaviour towards important relatives was given by a Dorobo in the following words: *Makicupe papa na hoxica a hoxice labwet*; *makicupe hoxey papa*; *makimanci hoxet ch ayo waleh ce somis, amu ya, agul waleh ap hoxicet*; *hoxwecincet* *labul*. ('A man does not use bad language to his father, though his father may beat him as a child, nor does he use bad language to his father's brother; he does not speak of dirty things, nor of sexual matters, to his mother and his mother's sister, for it is bad to do so; but we all play together, i. e. we are on terms of friendliness and 'clean fun'.') Generally speaking, seniority is a matter of age, except with respect to the father's brother and men of senior age-sets.

[567] It is unlikely that any Dorobo ever sees his father's father's father, and the father's father is seen only by small children. The father's father is regarded much as one's own father. But the father's mother helps in the care of the children, and so becomes an object not only of familiarity but of affection as well to the children. To all of the father's generation a man should show respect and obedience. He must not insult them, nor use unsuitable language in their presence. Corporal punishment may be inflicted on a rude or disobedient child with the hand or with a stick, by father, mother, and father's brother. Verbal correction is also a common method of dealing with naughty children, and though a man would not as a rule say to a naughty child who had made him angry anything as drastic as *Amin celdei* (may you die of dysentery), in case the spirit-world took him at his word, he might go as far as *Jam fiat* (eat dirt), an expression which if used by a child to a senior would certainly earn a beating.

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[183] Most Dorobo are fond of their parents, and treat them in old age with much kindness and consideration. Wherever I found aged parents living with their sons it was the same; and the more helpless the parent, the greater the trouble taken to make them comfortable. The old father of Pilo, to whom I have already referred, was such a one. Bent double, hardly able to move without help, he spent his time lying outside in the sun when it was warm, and indoors beside the fire when it was cold. He had to be helped in and out, and fed and looked after like a child; but it was all done cheerfully by Coimim and his wife, in whose hut the old man lived, and if they could not attend to him, Pilo and his wife did.

father (if he lives nearby), to his brothers, and lastly, if there is any over, to his clansmen in the settlement; so that a man who gets a pound or so of Nandi tobacco does not keep much of it for himself.

Drink, mainly in the form of honey-wine, is prepared not so much for private consumption as for social gatherings. It is used in various magic-religious performances, and as part of the bride-payment. When a man is visited by a friend or two, he gives them honey-wine; when there is a clan council, honey-wine is drunk; and when men and women meet for a wedding or a naming they drink honey-wine. It is thus an indispensable part of Dorobo social life. When a man wants to relax, he lies down and goes to sleep, but his amusement is composed of social gatherings. Visiting, ceremonials, and clan councils in fact provide him with his entertainment, and conversation and gossip seem to take the place of games and dances. I saw no sign whatever of the game called *Aeraiak* by the Nandi, which is played with seeds or pebbles in holes in the ground or in a board, and never heard it mentioned. I neither saw nor heard of a dance, and I never once heard a Dorobo of either sex singing.

The principal standard of wealth is really a man's skill as trapper, hunter, and bee-keeper. But the products of this skill are perishable, and formerly the only way in which tangible wealth could be accumulated was in the form of weapons, honey-barrils, and dogs. Now that the old hunting conditions have gone, it is becoming possible for a man to accumulate wealth to a very limited extent in cattle or goats, which he can get by purchase, gift-exchange, or through bride-payment. The use of money has just become familiar, and a certain number of Dorobo earn wages; but except for one or two who have joined the Police, wages are not high, and the average in 1939 was 7 to 10 shillings a month. So far the Dorobo have had little inducement to work for wages, except that by signing on as squatters for a small wage they can acquire a temporary right to live on what was their own land. Beyond the fact that money enables them to buy a little extra food, our idea of wealth means little or nothing to them, and they have not yet advanced far enough into the transitional stage for it to be anything more than a small supplement to their traditional way of living. It is all that they can do to maintain themselves, let alone accumulate reserves or surplus wealth.

The transitional stage which the Dorobo had reached by 1939 is that from hunting to agriculture, with at the same time a strong desire to acquire cattle. It is sometimes suggested that hunting peoples like the Dorobo are really agriculturalists or pastoralists who have had to give up their agricultural or pastoral way of life and take to hunting. This may be true of some, such as the 'false Dorobo' in parts of Kenya who are merely outlaws and fugitives from various tribes. But it is quite clearly not true of the real Dorobo², like those who form the subject of this paper, who are unmistakably non-pastoral and non-agricultural. Their basic hunting tendency is shown by their character and behaviour, by their hunting techniques and skill, by

² Cf. my remarks in JRAI 50, 1929, p. 578.

[P. 196, A]

Economic life to-day is centred more and more
on the *indaba* than on hunting.

The family group is interdependent: the men
trap, make tools, protect the family; the women
look after house and children, and prepare food;
the children, while dependant on their parents for
existence, help them with the *indaba* and live-
stock, and in various other small ways.

There is little specialisation, since all men
make traps and honey-barels, and all women can
make baskets. Joint-production occurs in (1)
house-building, when the whole family takes part;
(2) cultivation; (3) in hunting and in digging
coloured earth. Food produced by the family is
shared by husband, wife, and children, and also
by the husband's and the wife's parents. Meat
caught by trapping is divided between the trapper's
family and the other people living in the settle-
ment. Vegetable foods are not shared thus, since
they can be got by all. Hospitality is given to
visiting relatives, clansmen, age-mates (though they
do not sleep with their host's wife), and even to
stray travellers, once their good faith is established.
Beer is drunk at social gatherings of men or
women, at clan councils, and on ceremonial occa-
sions. And just as meat is distributed in a
particular way (p. 193), so with tobacco: a man who
acquires some gives it first to his father, then to
his wife's father, and lastly to his brothers and
clansmen, if it will go so far.

The typical Duraho hut, *hukwaga*, is extremely
simple, being no more than a framework of sticks
covered with leaves, and a hide on top. They are
now building larger and better huts of Nandi type,
sometimes with unplastered walls; and an inter-
mediate form may be seen, with a nearly flat roof.

D. THE MAGICO-RELIGIOUS ASPECT OF ECONOMIC

That the Duraho had hunting magic is certain:
old men say that some had it, while others had
none; my friend Arap Minig, for example, says he
was one of those who had none. Since hunting
is the one phase of Duraho life that appears to be
gone for ever as a result of government action
(in spite of sporadic individual activities), this
important subject is, I fear, irrevocably lost.

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IV.

000 Marital relations. -- Polygyny. -- Betrothal. -- State of being betrothed. -- Conversion of the young man to the state of the married. -- Bride price. -- Forcing the consent of the father of the bride. -- Exchange of wives. -- Obstacles to marriage. -- Entering into marriage. -- Dissolution of the marriage.

595 The marital relations also offer little that is new. Polygyny exists only to a limited extent; most of the people are too poor to acquire and support more than one wife; only a few have two wives, and if a man has three of them it is a rarity. Betrothal in earliest childhood seem to be more frequent here than among the Masai, but so more binding and without legal consequences. [As a rule after circumcision the youth is betrothed to a girl eight to ten years old, after his father has proposed for him to her parents. As among the Masai, the FL13 betrothed persons live apart and may not even see each other. The bridegroom lives with a girl in the one camp, and in the other, the bride with another youth. If the bride becomes pregnant before the wedding, dissolution of the betrothal does not always take place, as among the Masai, but rather the one who made her pregnant must reimburse the bridegroom by the payment of a head of cattle.

561 Here, just as among the Masai, the young men of an age class
582 together decide upon their entering the standing of the married, and
574 their fellow campmates confirm this intention by a feast corresponding
[273] to the of gated I of II, in which friends and neighbors participate.
[224] They are served game and honey beer, the latter of which, however, the marriage candidates may not yet drink. They like to set the feast for the day after a successful elephant hunt, so that the guests can feast heartily on meat.

583 Before marriage can be entered into, the bride price is to be
(439) paid. The bridegroom usually gives the father of the bride, even before her circumcision, five pots of honey and five beehives, and, soon after her circumcision, half of a slain female elephant with the tusk that belongs to its father-in-law, two head of cattle, which

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224 they particularly value the entrails and also do not scorn the meat of
224 fallen or stricken animals; indeed, even the skin of elephant, rhinoc-
[223] eros, and hippopotamus is eaten roasted. As huntable, i.e., here
[439] edible, the Wandorobo regard elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus,
pigs, zebras, all cloven-footed animals from the giraffe to the tiny
dwarf antelope, hares, rock rabbits, and, of the birds, the ostrich,
which, however, they shoot only on account of its feathers, which the
Masai like to buy for the manufacture of the war head-ornaments.
They do not hunt monkeys and lower animals, because they do not
relish their meat.

224 On the day before the new moon, and in places also on the
seventeenth day, the ol onjogi, no one goes hunting because, according
to popular belief, one would not kill anything on the former day,
[225] whereas on the latter the bow would break. The red-headed Anaplectes
[177] melanotis is regarded as unlucky for the hunter. If the hunter sees it
along the way he returns to camp immediately and does not leave it
again until several hours later, in order to try his luck anew.

561 Like the warriors of the Masai, the dobonyo of the Wandorobo also
224 held their meat meals in the forest. Whereas among the former,
171 however, these are a result of the food rules, according to which the
[178] warrior may not eat meat in the kraal, among the latter it is only a
matter of observing an ancient custom for which there is no longer
any reason today, since the unmarried man usually eats his meat food
in the hut. On the other hand, there is greater justification for retain-
[262] ing the ou dorok, where they strengthen themselves by a plentiful
[228] eating of meat for a larger hunting expedition for more distant and at
the same time dangerous game, such as elephants and buffalo. The
[263] many spices and stimulants that we became acquainted with among
[276] the Masai are also used by the Wandorobo, but to a far lesser extent.
They do not divide up into fellowships for the meals in the bush, but
only for the hunting expeditions. Each company, as a rule, consists
561 of four men and is called e sirigi, in which one recognizes the present
224 Masai word ou sirigi. The booty is divided among the participants in
equal parts. If an individual hunter or an e sirigi spends the night in
• [574] a strange camp, the host is given a foreleg and a hind leg of the
hunting booty.

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From time to time the people celebrate a supplication feast for Ud, which they call kurong or kurong. For a kurong a hawa, a feast to ask God for children, the married women station themselves in a circle around a small fire into which, just as for every other supplication feast, they strew the residue of the honey beer, consisting chiefly of wax particles, so that its fragrance will rise up to God. While an aged, respected man goes around the circle and sprinkles these present with honey beer, they sing: Ud nga hawa! After this has gone on for a quarter of an hour, they start to dance, continuing to sing the same words.

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The dance is followed by a meal at which meat and honey beer are consumed. At a kurong e aga they ask God for meat. Beside a small fire they place upright a straight branch with several forks at the top, the twigs of which are cut off short. The empty stick is supposed to show God that they do not have any meat. All the campmates station themselves around the fire and sing: Ud ngari' magat (magat = game). The next morning the hunters set out, and as soon as they bring home meat, a small piece is placed on each twig of the forks of the branch. Again all surround the newly kindled fire and now sing: Ud urag halag ara, which is to say: God, give us still more food. The men celebrate another supplication feast before a larger hunting expedition. In the middle of the camp a small fire is made, around which the men stand

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in a circle. Each one has the bow in the left hand, a twig of the offi tree (Acaris mellifera) in the right one. Then, going around to the left, they walk around the fire four times, during which they sing Ud ngari' magat. They maintain that they have never yet prayed in this way in vain, but that after a kurong e aga they always returned from hunting with rich booty. The Wandorobos do not have a feast corresponding to the ol ngari' ol gerenti.³ Rather, without special ceremonies, they cut a strip out of the hide of an animal just slain and wear it as an amulet around the right middle finger. As soon as they meet something along the way that makes them afraid, be it a predatory animal or an enemy,

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they blow on the hide strip, which is the equivalent of a prayer for protection. Other amulets are seen extremely rarely. The author saw only one, which they called tururo and which consisted of a small piece of rock. It was worn on the neck ring and was supposed to protect one from predatory animals. If individual persons spend the night
1. [A supplication feast conducted by the Masai to preserve the health of human beings and livestock--Analyst]